



Reporters' Tip Sheet

TOMORROW'S HEADLINES TODAY

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

August-September 2005

Seen an Ivory-Billed Woodpecker? Here's How to Report It



Photo by Mark Godfrey/The Nature Conservancy

Have you seen an Ivory-billed woodpecker, the largest woodpecker in the United States that was believed to be extinct? There's a new procedure for reporting your sighting, and for requesting information about this rare and magnificent bird. A newly-formed recovery team also intends to have its plan for protecting the woodpecker ready by summer 2007.

The April discovery of at least one Ivory-billed woodpecker in Arkansas' Cache River National Wildlife Refuge has caused an outpouring of hope that more birds exist. Given the excitement, Cache River Refuge has taken steps to ensure the bird's protection while allowing birders to share in the joy. The refuge has established a 5,000-acre managed area, with five special access points for visitors hoping to catch a glimpse of the woodpecker. The refuge is working with partners to construct observation towers to make viewing easier.

That sighting has also resulted in the formation of a federal recovery team that brings together some of the best minds in ecology, conservation biology, forestry, and ornithology from a wide spectrum of organizations. The team's goal is to develop a full recovery program by summer 2007, covering the bird's historic range in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is involved in the recovery program and in the procedure for keeping track of additional ivory-billed woodpecker sightings. Information is being gathered and provided through two avenues:

1. Reports of sightings can be sent to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Attn.: Communications, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. A web site has been established to track

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Maryland Dam Removal in August Will Benefit Fish, Stream Habitat

The removal of the Octoraro Dam in Cecil County, Maryland, on August 15 will open 19 miles of stream habitat to American and hickory shad, river herring, American eel, and other fish species. Other benefits will include opening of stream access for recreational paddling, and elimination of dam safety issues.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources will use construction equipment to remove the dam, which is near Rising Sun on Octoraro Creek, a tributary of the Susquehanna River. The removal is part of a movement to restore the natural flow of rivers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The project is a partnership of the Octoraro Watershed Association, Octoraro Water Authority, American Rivers, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Cooperative efforts of these partners have prompted the two approving agencies – the Maryland Department of the Environment and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – to take a less rigid approach to permitting dam removals. Four more dam removals are in the planning process.

For more information, contact David Sutherland, Fish and Wildlife Service Chesapeake Bay Field Office, (410) 573-4535.

90 Varieties of Dragonflies Are the Stars of This Show

The annual Dragonfly Festival at the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico on August 27-28 will highlight the 90 varieties of dragonflies and damselflies (odonates) that populate the refuge. Visitors of all ages can appreciate this remarkable diversity through tours of the refuge, slide shows, and displays.

Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge has gained widespread fame for supporting one of the most diverse populations of dragonflies and damselflies in North America. Among them are the continent's largest and smallest dragonfly species.

The Dragonfly Festival is held during the peak viewing time of the year for these brilliantly-colored insects, which are also best viewed during the midday. Dragonfly experts will lead tours in the refuge's backcountry for visitors, who are advised to bring binoculars and a field guide.



Other activities will include hourly slide shows, exhibits, and children's activities.

For more information, contact Steve Alvarez, Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge, (505) 622-6755, ext. 4009.

Texas Refuge Research Focuses on Aggressive Deeprooted Sedge Weed

Deeprooted sedge is an invasive, non-native weed species that could become one of the worst plant threats to the wet coastal grasslands and coastal prairies of Texas and Louisiana. Research this summer at Texas' Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge is exploring ways to keep the weed under control.

First reported in the United States in 1990, deeprooted sedge is a native weed of South America that reaches its highest densities in roadside ditches, pastures, and edges of rice fields. A typical plant produces 250,000 seeds per year. Because the weed can spread rapidly and has such high seed production, "this species has



the potential to be a serious threat to native ecosystems," according to Matt Whitbeck, wildlife biologist at the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge.

Refuge biologists this summer have started research to quantify the weed's response to fire, herbicides, and mowing; to study the seed's characteristics; and to focus on ways to control the plants. The research project is a partnership of the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Stephen F. Austin State University, Galveston Bay Estuary Program, and The Nature Conservancy. Work is also being done at the Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge in Eagle Lake, TX.

For more information, contact Matt Whitbeck, Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, (409) 267-3337.

Alaska's Summer Science Camps Blend Science with Native Cultures

About a dozen summer science camps on Alaska's national wildlife refuges teach science and environmental stewardship, closely tied to native tribal cultures. Working with tribal elders in many cases, the camps are co-sponsored by a range of partners, including native villages and school departments, and are offered at no cost to the children who attend.

For more than 10 years, these summer science camps have brought new generations of Alaskans closer to their native cultures as they learn about the state's unique wildlife and ecosystems. The camps are as diverse as the villages and cultures that make up Alaska.

At remote Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, students camp overnight as they explore the mysteries of the Eastern Aleutian Islands and the Bering Sea. At Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge, high school students get school credit in boreal botany at a camp that includes field work, homework, and writing assignments. At Selawik National Wildlife Refuge, students learn about traditional whitefish subsistence fishing methods, whitefish ecology, and fishing culture.

The young people's appreciation of science and the environment can extend beyond summer camp. Some campers come back to the science camps years later to work as college volunteers, or stay involved with the refuges in other ways.

For more information, contact Maeve Taylor, volunteer and grant coordinator for the National Wildlife Refuge System in Alaska, (907) 786-3391.



Festivals to Celebrate Shorebirds, Migratory Birds, and Whooping Cranes

Public festivals in three states will celebrate the wonder and beauty of shorebird migration (Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex), migratory birds (Modoc National Wildlife Refuge, California), and whooping cranes (Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, Wisconsin) in early September. Events will include programs about native birds and other species, and activities for children.

Oregon Shorebird Festival, September 9-11, Bandon: Birders of all levels are welcome to join presentations, field trips, and reviews of birds seen along the scenic Oregon coast, which include avocets, plovers, and sandpipers. Contact Dawn Grafe, Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex, (541) 867-4550; e-mail, oregoncoast@fws.gov.

Wings of the Warners Festival (Migratory Bird Festival), September 16-18, Alturas, CA: With a sandhill crane theme, the festival highlights the birds of the Warner Mountains, and includes guided tours and workshops at Modoc National Wildlife Refuge, where species include loons, grebes, egrets, and waterfowl. Contact the refuge at (530) 233-3572; e-mail, Modoc@fws.gov.

Whooping Crane Festival, September 17, Necedah, WI: Thousands of people come each year to this event to honor and learn about the elegant whooping crane



and its reintroduction program at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. The festival includes guided refuge bus tours, information booths, and programs in Necedah, where the local restaurant has even changed its name to "The Little Crane Café." Contact Larry Wargowsky, Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, (608) 565-4400; e-mail, Larry_Wargowsky@fws.gov.

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sightings at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/ivory>, and folks can e-mail information to ivorybill@cornell.edu.

2. Requests for information or comments can be sent to Ivory-Billed Woodpecker Recovery Team Leader, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta, GA 30345; e-mail, ivorybill@fws.gov.

For more information, contact Jeff Fleming at 404-679-7287, Tom Mackenzie at 404-679-7291, or Central Arkansas Refuges Complex Manager Dennis Widner, 870-347-2614.

For all the latest news releases from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, visit our Virtual Newsroom at <http://news.fws.gov/newsreleases>

Timber Harvest Underway to Restore Rare Atlantic White Cedars

A large-scale timber harvest is now underway at Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia to restore rare Atlantic white cedar stands damaged by Hurricane Isabel in September 2003. The harvest will also reduce the potential for wildfires in the region.

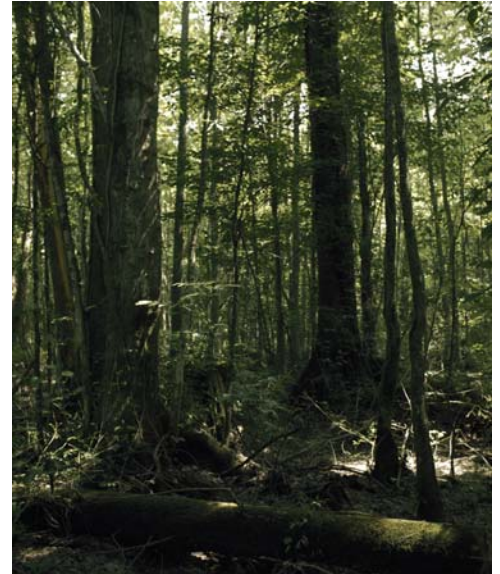
Atlantic cedar forests have almost disappeared during the last two centuries. The hurricane destroyed 3,000 acres of Atlantic white cedar forest stands at the refuge, which were among the largest remaining stands in the world.

Storm damage left the forest floor littered with a thick layer of debris that would prohibit the natural regrowth of the white cedars. An estimated 85 percent of mature cedar-dominated stands, which were 80 years old or older,

were destroyed. These trees are habitat to many of the refuge's wildlife species, particularly several species of warblers and the Hessel's hairstreak butterfly.

Salvaging the damaged cedar will promote regeneration of Atlantic white cedar forests, and reduce a potential fuel source for wildfires. Because much of the severely damaged cedar stands are inaccessible to conventional equipment, multiple helicopters will be used in late summer and early fall to remove trees from remote areas. The harvesting operation will continue through the end of the year.

For more information, contact Terri Edwards, Northeast Region External Affairs Department, (413) 253-8324.



World Wilderness Conference Set for Anchorage

The 8th Annual World Wilderness Conference, September 30 – October 6 in Anchorage, will bring together senior representatives from government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and academia to delve into *Wilderness, Wildlands, and People – A Partnership for the Planet*, the theme for the world's longest-running environmental forum. The conference will focus on Alaska, the Russian Far East, Canada, and the North Pacific.

About 15 representatives from the National Wildlife Refuge System will make presentations at the conference, including:

- Conflicts and solutions for wilderness along the Mexico-U.S. border, by Roger Di Rosa, manager of Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, NM

- Stewardship and management of coastal and marine wilderness, presented by Greg Siekaniec, manager of Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge



The Refuge System has more than 20 million acres of designated wilderness, covering about 20 percent of its lands. About 90 percent of refuge wilderness is in Alaska.

For more information, contact Nancy Roeper, National Wildlife Refuge System, (703) 358-2389.

Lewis and Clark Wildlife Exhibit Hits the Road In August

Starting in August, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Region will commemorate the Lewis and Clark bicentennial with a traveling exhibit about the hundreds of animals and plants that the explorers documented, which had been previously unknown to science. The exhibit will visit local celebrations and national wildlife refuges in Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

From 1803-1806, Lewis and Clark described an American landscape as no other Americans would see it. They accumulated significant new information about known species, and introduced ecological methods to the American West.

Two centuries later, a traveling exhibit will tell the American people about the rich history of the previously known and unknown fish and wildlife documented by Lewis and Clark, and how species, habitats, and landscapes have changed since the explorers' journey. The exhibit features live wildlife demonstrations, state-of-the-art visual imagery, and interactive interpretive displays.

The exhibit's travels start on August 6 at the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation annual meeting in Portland, and will continue through next June, with stops throughout the three states, including the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge in Ridgefield, Washington.

For more information, contact Susan Saul, Pacific Region/ Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, (503) 872-2728.



LEWIS & CLARK EVENT SCHEDULE

When 2005

Aug. 6-8

Aug. 13-21

Aug. 26-28

Sept. 16-26

Oct. 1-9

Oct. 14-17

Oct. 21-24

Oct. 28-31

Nov. 5

Washington

Nov. 7-15

Nov. 19-22

Nov. 28 - Dec. 11

What / Where

Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation annual meeting,
Portland, Oregon

Salmon, Idaho

A Taste of Lewis & Clark, Bonneville Dam, Cascade Locks,
Oregon

Kamiah, Idaho

Clarkston, Washington

Kennewick, Washington

Pendleton, Oregon

The Dalles, Oregon

Cathlapotle Plankhouse, Ridgefield NWR, Ridgefield,

Long Beach, Washington

Seaside, Oregon

Vancouver Washington

2006

Mar. 14-20

Mar. 25-Apr. 2

Apr. 7-10

Apr. 14-17

Apr. 22-25

Apr. 29 - May 7

May 12-15

May 20-29

Jun 3-17

Jun 18-25

St. Helens, Oregon

Grand Ronde, Oregon

Stevenson, Washington

Toppenish, Washington

Warm Springs, Oregon

Umatilla, Oregon

Dayton, Washington

Boise, Idaho

Spalding, Idaho

Dworshak National Fish Hatchery, Orofino, Idaho